UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.154/300
6 January 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/RUSSIAN

COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS WITH
THE HOST COUNTRY

LETTER DATED 31 DECEMBER 1996 FROM THE DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS WITH THE HOST COUNTRY

I have the honour to request you to circulate, as an official document of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, the text of a note verbale from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Office of Foreign Missions of the United States Department of State in New York (see annex), concerning the inadmissible actions taken by the New York City police against Mr. Boris V. Obnossov, First Secretary of the Mission, on 29 December 1996.

I also request you to convene an urgent meeting of the Committee to consider this matter.

(Signed) A. GORELIK
First Deputy Permanent Representative

96-00286 (E) 080197 080197 090197

/...

ANNEX

Note verbale dated 30 December 1996 from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation of the United Nations addressed to the Office of Foreign Missions of the United States Department of State

The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of Foreign Missions of the United States Department of State and has the honour to inform it about the following.

On 29 December 1996, at 2.30 p.m., Mr. Boris V. Obnossov, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Mr. S. M. Masyukov, staff member of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, and Mr. Yuri N. Orange, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Belarus to the United Nations, accompanied by their wives, stopped for lunch at a Chinese restaurant located in New York City on Amsterdam Avenue between 81st and 82nd Streets. After lunch, at about 4 p.m., the wives of the above-mentioned persons left with Mr. Masyukov in his car. Mr. Boris Obnossov and Mr. Yuri Orange proceeded to Mr. Obnossov's car (diplomatic licence plate 133 YRD), parked on the corner of 80th Street and Amsterdam Avenue. After they had sat in the car, two police officers accosted the vehicle, one of them filling out a violation ticket. In response to Mr. Obnossov's question as to what the violation had been, one of the police officers demanded his driver's licence, which was immediately produced. Without paying attention to the diplomatic IDs, police officers Finnerty and Gaine started dragging Mr. Boris Obnossov and Mr. Yuri Orange out of the car by force. While doing so, one of the police officers broke Mr. Obnossov's arm, broke his glasses and tore his clothes. Both diplomats were handcuffed despite the complete lack of resistance on their part and their diplomatic identification cards that had been produced.

Subsequently, Mr. Obnossov and Mr. Orange were taken to the 20th Police Precinct, where a procedure to confirm their diplomatic status was completed within 30 minutes. After that, handcuffs were removed and a conversation with Captain James A. Clark of the Precinct took place. During the conversation, despite the diplomats' legitimate demands for explanations, the Captain failed to give any plausible version of what had happened. Nor did he offer apologies for the unacceptable brutality.

At about 6 p.m., the diplomats left the Precinct, after which Bois V. Obnossov was taken to Lenox Hill Hospital, where he was treated for a fracture and his arm put in a plaster cast.

At 1.30 a.m. on 30 December 1996, Mr. Obnossov was brought to the living compound in a serious physical and depressed moral condition.

The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations holds as absolutely inadmissible the action of police officers - representatives of United States official authorities - against the Russian diplomat. In fact, what has happened is an attack on a person enjoying diplomatic immunity and

protection, which represents a violation of international law and, as we understand, relevant United States legislation.

The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations expects from the United States authorities a thorough investigation of the incident, official explanations and apologies, disciplinary action against the culprits, as well as compensation for damages sustained by Mission staff member Boris V. Obnossov, including his hospital fees, treatment expenses and disability leave costs.

The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of Foreign Missions of the United States Department of State the assurances of its highest consideration.